



**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE AND  
CONSUMER SERVICES**

# **Regional Animal Health Laboratories**

**May 1, 2005**

**Office of Laboratory Services**

## **AVIAN**

Avian necropsy submissions to the Harrisonburg Regional Animal Health Laboratory (RAHL) continued at a higher than normal rate over March and April, particularly in chickens. As usual, most cases of commercial poultry submitted to Harrisonburg were young birds with a combination of diagnoses that included colibacillosis, omphalitis, enteritis, and other bacterial infections. Several cases of ricketts were seen in commercial flocks.

## **BOVINE**

Late winter/early spring is a busy time for bovine necropsy submissions. This year was no different, particularly in the Lynchburg and Wytheville regions. In addition to the typical cases of pneumonia and neonatal enteritis, there were several cases of hypomagnesemia reported from the Wytheville region. Nutritional deficiencies in general contributed to several necropsy diagnoses from around the state. Malnutrition and "poor doing" cattle were found from Southampton County (Ivor RAHL) to Smyth County (Wytheville RAHL). Parasitism and selenium deficiency likewise contributed to bovine illness and death loss in the cases examined in the regional labs. One heavily parasitized cow from Mecklenburg Co. died secondary to aberrant nematode migration in the brainstem (Lynchburg RAHL). Cases of lymphosarcoma secondary to infection with Bovine Leukemia Virus were seen from Page County (Harrisonburg RAHL) and Surry County, NC (Wytheville RAHL). BVD infection was confirmed in two cases - young calves with pneumonia from Shenandoah County (Harrisonburg RAHL) and Grayson Co. (Wytheville RAHL). An older Angus cow in Wythe County was diagnosed with a chronic hypersensitivity pneumonitis, probably secondary to inhaling mold spores in hay. A calf from Tazewell County was also necropsied in the Wytheville lab and diagnosed with a ventricular septal defect. The Lynchburg RAHL diagnosed cases of neosporosis in a neonatal calf from Nottoway Co., and adenoviral pneumonia in a calf from Goochland Co.

## **CAMELID**

Camelid necropsies during this period were mostly performed at the Lynchburg RAHL. Diagnoses included cases of Parelaphostrongylus tenuis migration and

myelitis in an alpaca from Campbell County and a llama from Amherst County. Poor nutrition contributed to the death of several camelids in New Kent County, while an alpaca from King William County was diagnosed with polioencephalomalacia. An alpaca fetus necropsied at the Warrenton RAHL was found to have been aborted due to a bacterial placentitis caused by an E. coli infection.

## **CAPRINE**

A pygmy goat herd in Loudoun County that had lost 85% of its kid crop so far this year had a 2 week old kid necropsied in Warrenton. That animal was found to have severe coccidiosis and very low liver selenium. A similar case of low selenium and severe parasitism was seen in a mixed breed doe from Bland County necropsied in Wytheville. A 7 year old Nubian wether necropsied in Warrenton was diagnosed with a ruptured urinary bladder secondary to urolithiasis.

## **COMPANION ANIMALS**

**Canine-** There were a larger than normal number of canine necropsies performed at the regional animal health laboratories this period. Several were associated with high profile cases that drew media attention. 3 pit bulls and 1 Shih Tzu were necropsied in Warrenton as part of a case in Spotsylvania County in which a woman and her dog were killed by roaming pit bulls. Smyth County submitted to the Wytheville lab a representative sample of the approximately 150 dead dogs found dumped next to a stream there. In both cases, no significant additional findings were reported to law enforcement officials. Submissions of emaciated canines also came in from law enforcement officials in Richmond City, Campbell County, and Amherst County (all to the Lynchburg RAHL). A 10 yr old Pomeranian which collapsed and died after anesthesia at a veterinary hospital in Virginia Beach was necropsied at the Ivor RAHL and found to have left ventricular hypertrophy leading to cardiac insufficiency. The Lynchburg RAHL also diagnosed a case of brodifacoum toxicity in a Norfolk terrier from Amelia County.

**Feline-** Law enforcement submissions came in from Roanoke County (Lynchburg) and Orange County (Warrenton).

**EQUINE-** A mare from Appomattox County was diagnosed with Clostridium difficile enterotoxemia at the Lynchburg RAHL. The horse had been given virginiamycin as a feed supplement for founder prevention. The Ivor RAHL necropsied a Morgan mare from Chesapeake that died from an acute gastric rupture, and a Standardbred from Prince George that died subsequent to an intestinal entrapment by a pedunculated lipoma. A gelding from Fauquier County with a history of anemia and colic was necropsied in Warrenton and found to have a gastrointestinal stromal tumor.

**OTHER SUBMISSIONS-** Aldicarb (Temik) toxicosis was diagnosed in a Cooper's hawk, gray fox, and in chunks of hot dogs submitted to the Lynchburg RAHL by the Roanoke County Police Department. The origin of the poisoned meat is under investigation.

A case of iatrogenic strangles in a horse from Fauquier County again demonstrated the importance of following the vaccine manufacturer's instructions. A horse vaccinated with the S. equi vaccine at the same time as another injection is given can develop an injection-site abscess with S. equi at that site. To prevent this, the manufacturer recommends giving the strangles vaccine by itself, and not in conjunction with other vaccines.

Several large herd surveys for Mycoplasma sp. in milk have been conducted at the Lynchburg RAHL, with the infection rate at approximately 10%.

## NEWS AND NOTES

### Client Survey

A client survey was recently mailed to all veterinary practices who have utilized the services of a regional animal health laboratory within the last 12 months. To date, the response rate has been more than 50%. The responses are currently being coded and compiled, and the results will be sent to all clients in the near future. We appreciate your assistance with this survey, and with your participation in our quality assurance process.

### National Animal Identification System

The RAHLs are now capable of assisting individuals to obtain a premises ID, the first step in the National Animal Identification System. Producers are encouraged to register themselves at [www.vdacs.virginia.gov](http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov), or to come in to either one of our offices or their local Cooperative Extension Office for assistance.

### Arbovirus Testing in Equines

The Virginia Department of Health this year is once again helping to subsidize testing for West Nile virus infection in equines. A grant from the Centers for Disease Control will allow veterinary practitioners to test clinically ill horses for WNV using the IgM Capture ELISA available at the Warrenton RAHL. Clinically ill equines east of the Interstate 95 corridor will also be tested for Eastern Equine Encephalitis free of charge. Please contact your local RAHL for more information

## PERSONNEL CHANGES IN THE RAHLs

There were no personnel changes in the regional laboratories during this period.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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